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Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 23 July 2015

[*on a proposal considered in plenary meeting (E/2015/L.23), as revised*]

2015/35. Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration[1] and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,[2] adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011, and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 65/280 of 17 June 2011, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Programme of Action,

Reaffirming the overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action of overcoming the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve the internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

Recalling its resolution 2014/29 of 25 July 2014 on the Istanbul Programme of Action,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 69/231 of 19 December 2014,

Noting the theme of the 2015 annual ministerial review, "Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals: what it will take", and the theme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, "Strengthening integration, implementation and review: the high-level political forum on sustainable development after 2015",

Noting also the holding of the ministerial meeting of Asia-Pacific least developed countries on graduation and the post-2015 development agenda in Kathmandu from 16 to 18 December 2014 and the ministerial meeting of African least developed countries on structural transformation, graduation and the post-2015 development agenda in Milan, Italy, from 8 to 10 June 2015,

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[1] *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9–13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. I.

[2] Ibid., chap. II.

Please recycle

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020;[3]

2. *Recognizes* that the least developed countries have made some progress on many of the goals and targets in the Istanbul Programme of Action,[2] leading to structural change in a few of them, expresses its concern that most least developed countries continue to face pervasive poverty, serious structural impediments to growth, low levels of human development, inequality and high exposure to shocks and disasters, and also expresses its concern that the challenges presented by the global economic environment are putting at risk the hard-won gains achieved so far and the ability to expand those gains to all least developed countries;

3. *Welcomes* the progress made by many least developed countries in implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action, including by mainstreaming it into relevant planning documents and development strategies, calls upon the least developed countries, with the support of their development partners, to fulfil their commitments and to promote implementation of the Programme of Action, including by integrating its provisions into their national policies and development frameworks and conducting regular reviews with the full involvement of all key stakeholders, and in this regard invites the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, including United Nations regional and functional commissions, the United Nations resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams to actively support the integration and implementation of the Programme of Action;

4. *Also welcomes* the progress in, and stresses the importance of, mainstreaming the Istanbul Programme of Action into the development cooperation frameworks of development partners, and calls upon the development partners to further integrate the Programme of Action into their respective national cooperation policy frameworks, programmes and activities, as appropriate, to ensure enhanced, predictable and targeted support to the least developed countries, as set out in the Programme of Action, and the delivery of their commitments, and to consider appropriate measures to overcome shortfalls or shortcomings, if any;

5. *Invites* all organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations and international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and regional financial institutions to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, including by implementing enhanced substantive and technical assistance to the least developed countries in a timely manner, and to integrate the Programme of Action into their programmes of work, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates, and to participate fully in its review at the national, subregional, regional and global levels, and in this regard invites them to report on their contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action as part of their annual reporting to their respective governing bodies;

6. *Notes with great concern* the decline in the share of official development assistance to the least developed countries, welcomes the commitment to reverse this decline, reiterates that official development assistance continues to be the largest source of external financing for the development of the least developed

[3] A/70/83-E/2015/75.

countries globally and plays an important role in their development and that progress has been made during the past decade in increasing the flow of official development assistance to the least developed countries, underlines that the fulfilment of all official development assistance commitments is crucial, including the commitments by many developed countries to achieving the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to developing countries by 2015, as well as the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries as agreed in the Istanbul Programme of Action, and urges official development assistance providers that have not yet done so to fulfil their respective commitments to the least developed countries;

7. *Recalls* the commitment, contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action, that donor countries should review their official development assistance commitments in 2015 and consider further enhancing the resources for the least developed countries, and in this regard urges donor countries to give high priority to the least developed countries in terms of their allocation of official development assistance, taking into account their needs, complex challenges and resources gap;

8. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, their development partners, the United Nations system and all other actors to further intensify their efforts to fully and effectively implement, in a coordinated, coherent and expeditious manner, the commitments that have been made in the Istanbul Programme of Action in its eight priority areas, namely, (*a*) productive capacity, (*b*) agriculture, food security and rural development, (*c*) trade, (*d*) commodities, (*e*) human and social development, (*f*) multiple crises and other emerging challenges, (*g*) mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building, and (*h*) good governance at all levels;

9. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, in cooperation with their development partners, to broaden their existing country review mechanisms, including those for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the implementation of poverty reduction strategy papers, common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, and the existing consultative mechanisms to cover the review of the Istanbul Programme of Action;

10. *Calls upon* the developing countries, guided by the spirit of solidarity and consistent with their capabilities, to provide support for the effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in mutually agreed areas of cooperation within the framework of South-South cooperation, which is a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation;

11. *Invites* the private sector, civil society and foundations to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in their respective areas of competence in line with the national priorities of the least developed countries;

12. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to include the issues of concern to the least developed countries in all relevant reports in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, in order to support the implementation of the goals set out in the Istanbul Programme of Action;

13. *Underlines* the need to give particular attention to the issues and concerns of the least developed countries in all major United Nations conferences and processes;

14. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work undertaken thus far by the Secretary-General to constitute a high-level panel of experts to carry out a feasibility study for a technology bank and science, technology and innovation

supporting mechanism dedicated to the least developed countries, and looks forward to the conclusion of the panel's work in line with General Assembly resolution 68/224 of 20 December 2013;

15. *Notes* the inclusion in its annual ministerial review, in 2015, of a review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action;

16. *Notes with appreciation* that several least developed countries have expressed their intention to reach the status of graduation by 2020, invites them to start the preparations for their graduation and transition strategy, and requests all relevant entities of the United Nations system, in particular the Office of the High Representative, to extend the necessary support in this regard;

17. *Recalls* the decision of the General Assembly in paragraph 24 of its resolution 68/224 that the special needs and development priorities of the least developed countries, including the eight priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action, such as productive-capacity-building, including through rapid development of infrastructure and energy, should be given appropriate consideration in the processes devoted to the elaboration of the post 2015 development agenda;

18. *Welcomes* the decision of the General Assembly to hold the comprehensive high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in Antalya, Turkey, for a period of three days in June 2016, notes the ongoing preparation for the review, including the regional review meetings held by the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in 2015, and looks forward to a successful outcome;

19. *Decides* to consider the issue of the comprehensive high-level midterm review as part of its coordination and management meetings in 2016;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Council at its substantive session of 2016, under the sub-item entitled "Review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020" of the item entitled "Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits", a progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action.

56th plenary meeting
23 July 2015